REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. Claims 1-34 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 15, 16, 27, and 28 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 5-7, and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,515,756 to Mastie et al. (hereinafter "Mastie"). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 5-7, and 33 are not obvious over Mastie.

Mastie is directed to providing a common repository for print attribute values to be applied to transform processes executing in multiple controllers in a network printing system (see, col. 1, lines 27-29). A print attribute refers to any type of control factor that is used to affect the print transform process which generates an output data stream that controls the printer, including form definitions, page definitions, page segments, overlays, and fonts (see, col. 2, lines 15-41). A printer manager routes print jobs received from clients to one of a plurality of printer controllers (see, col. 4, lines 3-5). The printer controllers are each capable of executing multiple instances of printer daemons that can each transform an input data file to a format that may be processed by the printer (see, col. 4, lines 8-12). When the printer manager receives a print job, the printer

manager determines the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file (see, col. 5, lines 50-54). After determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers (see, col. 5, lines 54-57). After selecting a printer daemon type and particular printer daemon from one of the printer controllers, the printer manager would then determine print attribute values by examining configuration files in the network, and would then invoke the selected printer daemon and transmit the determined print attribute values to the invoked printer daemon (see, col. 5, line 65 – col. 6, line 4).

With respect to claim 3, claim 3 recites:

> A computer implemented method comprising:
> checking an amount of time that a manager device took to service another device; and
> determining, based at least in part on the amount of time, whether the manager device is a desired manager of the other device.

Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest the method of claim 3.

Claim 3 as previously presented recited checking an amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device. Claim 3 has been amended to further clarify that this language refers to the amount of time that a manager device took to service another device. Thus, in claim 3, the checking and determining are for the other device that has already been serviced – the checking refers to the time that a manager device took to service the other device, not the time that the manager device is expected to take when servicing the device in the future.

Mastie discusses that when the printer manager receives a print job, the printer manager determines the type of printer daemon to use, e.g., PS2AFP, D2AFP, TIFF2AFO, etc., based on the type of input data file, e.g., PostScript, ditoff, TIFF, etc. (sec, col. 5, lines 50-54). Mastie also discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers (see, col. 5, lines 54-57). The printer daemon then generates the output data stream (see, col. 6, lines 4-7). Thus, it can be seen that Mastie discusses determining which printer daemon to invoke to generate the output data stream. Any determining that is performed by the printer manager is determining which printer daemon to use.

In claim 3, however, the checking refers to the time that a manager device took to service the other device. Thus, the checking and determining of claim 3 are for the other device that has already been serviced. Mastie discusses determining which printer daemon to use to generate the output data stream, not any sort of determining based on the printer daemon having already generated the output stream. Nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of any determining based on the printer daemon that has already generated the output stream. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest the checking and determining as recited in claim 3.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 3 is allowable over Mastie.

With respect to claim 5, claim 5 depends from claim 3, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 is allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3. Furthermore, claim 5 recites:

A method as recited in claim 3, wherein the manager device was not, when servicing the other device, the desired manager of the other device.

Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest the method of claim 5.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 3 it was asserted that:

As to claim 5, Mastie teaches the step of wherein the manager device was not, when servicing the other device, the desired manager of the other device (other printer that is not selected is not the desired manager, col. 5 lines 50-60).

This cited portion of Mastie is discussing determining which printer daemon to use for the print job. Thus, it appears that the rejection of claim 5 is relying on the printer daemon that is not selected in Mastie teaching that the manager device was not the desired manager of the other device. However, this printer daemon that is not selected in Mastie would not be used for the print job, and thus could not be the manager device that is checked in claim 3 (the manager device in claim 3 is the manager device that serviced the other device, and therefore could not be disclosed by a printer daemon that was not selected to be used for the print job).

Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of using, for a print job, a printer daemon that is not selected to be used for the print job. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest the method of claim 5.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 is allowable over Mastie.

With respect to claims 6 and 7, given that claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 3, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6 and 7 are likewise allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3.

With respect to claim 33, Applicant respectfully submits that, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 3, Mastie does not disclose or suggest a hardware selection module coupled to access the device service table and configured to check an amount of time that a manager device took to service another device, and determine, based at least in part on the amount of time, whether the manager device is a desired manager of the other device as recited in claim 33. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 33 is allowable over Mastie.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,490,052 to Yanagidaira (hereinafter "Yanagidaira"). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira.

Yanagidaira is directed to a printer controller installed for a printer which is connected to a network (see, col. 1, lines 7-9). As discussed in the Abstract of Yanagidaira, the printer controller controls the shared printer of a network to which the clients are connected. The clients are provided with browsers. The printer controller operates on the printer server which has a function of sending home page data containing information about the shared printer corresponding to URL from the clients connected to the network. The printer controller sends the home page data containing the information about the shared printer and performs at least one or more of operation monitoring, check and instruction of the shared

printer connected to the printer server according to the received URL indicating a request of that.

In contrast, claim 1 recites:

> A method, implemented by a computing device, the method comprising:
> sending a service request to a device, wherein the service request is a request for data relating to the operation of the device; and
> determining, based at least in part on an amount of time taken to service the device, whether the computing device is to be identified as typically servicing the device.

Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Yanagidaira does not disclose or suggest the method of claim 1.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 4, Mastie is cited as teaching the determining of claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that no such determining is disclosed or suggested in Mastie. As discussed above with respect to claim 3, Mastie discusses determining which printer daemon to use to generate the output data stream, not any sort of determining based on the printer daemon having already generated the output stream. Nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of any determining based on the printer daemon that has already generated the output stream. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest any determining based at least in part on an amount of time taken to service the device as recited in claim 1.

With respect to Yanagidaira, Yanagidaira is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira.

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Claims 4, 22, 24-26, 29-32, and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,766,348 to Combs et al. (hereinafter "Combs"). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4, 22, 24-26, 29-32, and 34 are not obvious over Mastie in view of Combs.

Combs is directed to a method and system for load-balanced data exchange in distributed network-based resource allocation (see, Title). As discussed in the Abstract of Combs, a distributed resource allocator system comprises a number of identical processes running on one or more computers attached to the communications network. Application programs request allocation of resources from a local distributed resource allocator system process running using a resource allocator applications programming interface. Application programs request allocation of resource from a remote distributed resource allocator system process via a resource allocator access protocol. The distributed resource allocator system is fault-tolerant and provides contention control and load balancing. The resource allocator system also manages information about the capacities and capabilities of resources connected to the communications network. Application programs can thus be easily written to make use of distributed resources connected to a communications network without having to manage global network information and without needing complex contention control and load balancing subroutines.

With respect to claim 4, claim 4 depends from claim 3, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie discussed above with respect to claim 3.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

Furthermore, Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 5 as teaching "wherein the determining comprises the step of the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time that a manager device took to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 4.

Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). However, nowhere is there any discussion or mention in Combs that this wait duration applies to the amount of time taken to service a device. Rather, the definition of the max wait duration argument in Combs (see, col. 11, lines 38-40) states that this is the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated – it does not make any mention of an actual amount of time taken to service a device. By defining this duration as the maximum time that the user will wait for the resource to be allocated, it follows that if this maximum time is exceeded the user will not wait for the resource to be allocated. Thus, using such a maximum time would result in no servicing of a device when the maximum time is exceeded, so there would be no amount of time that a manager device took to service another device that could be checked. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time that a manager device

took to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 4.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 13, it was asserted that:

> Regarding Combs, applicant argued that Combs does not mention the wait time contributes to amount of time taken to service (remarks, pages 20-21).
>
> The examiner's response is that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that a task/job/service requires minimum steps of starting, processing and finishing. Time spent/taken at each step contributes to the overall time of servicing. Therefore, the wait time, typically an integral part of the starting step, contributes to the amount of time taken to service.

Mastie, as discussed above, does not disclose checking an amount of time that a manager device took to service another device. Combs does not cure this deficiency. Combs defines the max wait duration as the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated. Nowhere in Combs is there any discussion or mention that this maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated accounts for time beyond allocation of the resource. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time that a manager device took to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 4.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 22, claim 22 recites:

> One or more computer readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a computing device, causes the one or more processors to perform acts comprising:
> receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager;
> identifying, to the device manager, one or more devices for which the device manager is the desired manager;
> for a plurality of additional devices for which the device manager is not the desired manager, checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied; and
> for each device for which the device manager is not the desired manager and for which the trigger condition is satisfied, identifying the device to the device manager.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such computer readable media is disclosed or suggested by Mastie in view of Combs.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 6 the printer manager accessing configuration file to identify the print attributes of Mastie is cited as teaching the receiving of claim 22. Applicant respectfully disagrees and submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager as recited in claim 22. As discussed above, the print attributes of Mastie are determined by examining configuration files in a network (see, col. 5, line 67 — col. 6, line 1). These print attributes include form definitions, page definitions, page segments, overlays, and fonts (see, col. 2, lines 15-41). Nowhere in this discussion of examining configuration files to determine print attributes is there any discussion or mention of receiving a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager, much less of receiving the

request from the device manager. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager as recited in claim 22.

With respect to Combs, Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 22 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claims 24, 25, 29, and 32, given that claims 24, 25, 29, and 32 depend from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 24, 25, 29, and 32 are likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22.

With respect to claim 26, given that claim 26 depends from claim 24, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 26 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 24. Furthermore, Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 7 as teaching "wherein the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40) is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the desired manager of the device to service the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 4, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument supplied to it (see, col. 11, lines 34-37). The "max wait duration" argument specifies the maximum time

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which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Combs of **how this max wait duration is generated**, much less that this max wait duration **is equal to the amount of time taken by a desired manager of a device to service the device.** Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the desired manager of the device to service the device as recited in claim 26.

With respect to Mastie, Mastie is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 26 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 30, given that claim 30 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Furthermore, Mastie in view of Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 7 as teaching claim 30. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claim 30 recites:

> One or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, wherein checking whether the trigger condition is satisfied comprises:
> generating a random value;
> determining whether the random value is less than a particular value;
> determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such generating and determining is disclosed or suggested in Mastie in view of Combs.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Mastie or Combs of generating **a random value** and determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 30. Simply disclosing a max wait duration argument in Combs that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated does not provide any disclosure or suggestion of generating a random value, much less of determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 30.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 31, given that claim 31 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 31 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Furthermore, claim 31 recites:

> One or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising altering the trigger condition over time.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such altering is disclosed or suggest in Mastie in view of Combs.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 16, Mastie in view of Combs is cited as teaching claim 31. However, it is not clear in this rejection of claim 31 where **altering** the trigger condition over time is allegedly disclosed in Mastie or Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or even mention

in the discussion of the max wait duration argument of Combs of altering the max wait duration over time. Applicant further respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention elsewhere in Mastie or Combs of altering a trigger condition over time. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Combs cannot disclose or suggest altering the trigger condition over time as recited in claim 31.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 31 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 34, claim 34 depends from claim 33, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 34 is allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 33. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie discussed above with respect to claim 33. Furthermore, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 4, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time that a manager device took to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 34. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 34 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira and in view of Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira for at least the reasons

discussed above with respect to claim 1. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie in view of Yanagidaira discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Furthermore, Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 8 as teaching "wherein the determining comprises the step of the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken to service the device is less than a decision threshold.

Mastie, as discussed above, does not disclose checking an amount of time taken to service a device. As discussed above with respect to claim 4, Combs does not cure this deficiency. Combs defines the max wait duration as the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated. Nowhere in Combs is there any discussion or mention that this maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated accounts for time beyond allocation of the resource. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 24. With respect to Yanagidaira, Yanagidaira is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie and Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira. Applicant respectfully

submits that claim 23 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira.

Claim 23 depends from claim 22, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Yanagidaira is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie in view of Combs discussed above with respect to claim 22. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira.

Claims 8-14 and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,682,304 to Tierney (hereinafter "Tierney") in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 8-14 and 17-21 are not obvious over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

Tierney is directed to an interface for controlling asynchronous communication between a digital computer and an input/output device such as a high-speed keyboard-equipped graphics terminal (see, col. 1, lines 14-18). As discussed in the Abstract of Tierney, the interface includes a microprocessor and a memory addressable thereby. The microprocessor controls data transfer from the host computer into an output buffer maintained within the memory and controls subsequent data transfer from the output buffer to an output device, independently of the operation of the host computer. Data received from the host computer is stored directly into an appropriate output buffer storage location without any time-consuming reading and writing of the data by the microprocessor. This is accomplished by providing a hardware register for storing data received from the

host computer. At the appropriate time data transfer from the microprocessor to the memory is disabled, and data transfer from the register to the memory is enabled. Data is thus rapidly transferred from the register directly into the memory location addressed by the microprocessor.

With respect to claim 8, claim 8 recites:

> One or more computer readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a device manager, causes the one or more processors to perform acts comprising:
> identifying a device to be serviced;
> checking whether the device manager is a desired manager for the device;
> if the device manager is the desired manager for the device, then servicing the device; and
> if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device, then checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied and servicing the device if the trigger condition is satisfied.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such computer readable media is disclosed or suggested by Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in the cited references of following one course of action if a device manager is the desired manager for a device, and another course of action if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device. As recited in claim 8, these two courses of action are: (1) servicing the device (if the device manager is the desired manager for the device); and (2) checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied and servicing the device if the trigger condition is satisfied (if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device). Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in Mastie, Tierney, or Combs is there any discussion or suggestion of

such two different courses of action based on whether the device manager is the desired manager for the device as recited in claim 8.

In the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 10, Combs is cited as teaching checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied and before servicing the device (the max wait duration, col. 11, lines 35-40). As discussed above, the max wait duration is an argument that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated. Nowhere in the cited references is there any discussion or mention of performing this check if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device. There mere discussion of a maximum time which a user will wait for a resource to be allocated does not provide any discussion or suggestion of performing the checking as recited in claim 8 if the device manager is not the desired manager for device. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references do not disclose or suggest the computer readable media of claim 8.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 9, claim 9 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 10 as teaching "wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager (table, col. 16 lines 9-15)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not

disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager.

The cited portion of Tierney reads:

> RAM 26 contains tables of address which point to the next available sequential storage locations in each of OUTBUFs 28, the location of the "oldest" data character in each of OUTBUFs 28 which has not yet been outputted to the associated output device, and corresponding pointers to each of INBUFs 48 . . . .

An OUTBUF is a separate temporary, cyclical, output storage buffer maintained in RAM for each of the four output channels (see, col. 5, lines 21-23). OUTBUFs each include 2,048 sequentially addressable one-byte storage locations used in pairs to store a data character and an "attribute code" which is utilized to control some aspects of the manner in which the data character is transmitted to the output device (see, col. 5, lines 25-31). An INBUF is a similar separate, cyclical, input storage buffer maintained in RAM for each input channel (see, col. 5, lines 23-25).

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Tierney of the OUTBUFs or INBUFs being a table from which a device to be serviced is selected. The OUTBUFs are output storage buffers, while the INBUFs are input storage buffers. Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of output and input storage buffers does not disclose or suggest a table from which a device to be serviced is selected, much less wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager as recited in claim 9.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 10, claim 10 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 10 as teaching "wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises receiving an indication (point to next, col. 16 lines 9-15) of the device from a central database". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises receiving an indication of the device from a central database.

As discussed above with respect to claim 9, the cited portion of Tierney discusses input storage buffers and output storage buffers. Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of output and input storage buffers does not disclose or suggest a central database from which an indication of the device to be serviced is received as recited in claim 9.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 11, claim 11 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at

p. 11 as teaching "wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device (the oldest .... Devices, col. 16 lines 10-15)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 9, the cited portion of Tierney discusses input storage buffers and output storage buffers. As discussed above, the cited portion also discloses that tables of addresses point to the location of the "oldest" data character in each of OUTBUFs which has not yet been outputted to the associated device. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of addresses that point to the oldest data character that has not yet been outputted do not disclose or suggest updating a **last service time** for the device as recited in claim 11. The addresses in the cited portion of Tierney identify the oldest data character, not a last service time. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device as recited in claim 11.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 12, claim 12 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and

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further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8.

With respect to claim 13, claim 13 depends from claim 12, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 12. Furthermore, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 9, Applicant respectfully submits that Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device manager as the desired manager for the device comprises identifying the device manager in a table entry corresponding to the device as recited in claim 13. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 14, claim 14 depends from claim 12, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 12. Furthermore, Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 11 as teaching "wherein the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40) is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 4, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument supplied to it (see, col.

11, lines 34-37). The "max wait duration" argument specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Combs of **how this max wait duration is generated**, much less that this max wait duration **is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device.** Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device as recited in claim 14.

With respect to Mastie and Tierney, Mastie and Tierney are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claims 17 and 18, claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 17 and 18 are allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8.

With respect to claim 19, given that claim 19 depends from claim 8, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 19 is likewise allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Mastie in view of Combs is cited in the September 8, 2005 Office Action at p. 11 as teaching claim 19. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claim 19 recites:

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